



Brieflet No. 17.

TIVOLI AND HADRIAN'S VILLA.

THERE are many delightful excursions out of Rome, easily managed in a day, but we had only time for one, which was reserved for the last available day, and most enjoyable it proved. The weather was glorious, albeit it was mid-winter. There was not a vestige of cloud in the azure sky; and I was fortunate in my companion—the son of an English clergyman fresh from Cambridge, brimful of classical lore as befitted the occasion. Tivoli is distant from Rome just eighteen miles as the crow flies, and our course by railway was nearly as straight—across the level Campagna. There was nothing very interesting in the shape of scenery *en route*, excepting the long stately aqueducts, arches above arches, in clear cut lines standing out in bold relief.

But we became greatly interested in our “second class” fellow-passengers, among whom were some good specimens of the native peasantry. In the city we had looked in vain for that in the features or expression of man or woman that could properly be called “classic.” The every-day modern Roman that one rubs shoulders with in the crowded thoroughfare is a very ordinary-looking personage; but among these swarthy “contadini” we found faces and figures as fine as any we had admired on canvas or in marble; and though we understood not a word of their language, it was surprising how successful we were in trying to strike up an acquaintance with them.

One hour brought us to the foot of the “Sabine Hills,” and to a very old orchard of olive trees where the train began to climb the mountain side. In a short time we reached Tivoli, the ancient *Tibur*, at an elevation of some five hundred feet above the plain. It is most romantically situated on the River Anio, which here leaps over a rocky barrier in a series of broken falls into a gorge four hundred feet deep, surrounded by wooded slopes. Perched on one of the highest crags are the picturesque ruins of the little temple of Vesta,* whence there is a charming view. On one side was distinctly seen the “Eternal City,” and its entrancing “Dome.” In front of us the historic hills among which Horace and Mæcenæus, Sallust and Catullus, had their summer villas, and the shady nooks where they mused, and read, and wrote the odes and essays and satires that sadly troubled us when we were boys, which, whatever their intrinsic merits, have lived for well-nigh two thousand years—and will live. “That snow-capped summit to the north of us *must* be SORACTE!” “It is!” chimed in our Cambridge friend, suiting his quotation to the discovery: “*Vides, ut alta stet nive candidum Soracte.*” All too soon, our guide hurried us from the spot directing our unwilling feet to the deserted villa of D’Este—a weird old mansion in an advanced stage of decayed grandeur, then, passing through

*This gem of ancient Roman architecture dates from the Augustan era, about 27 B.C. The temple seems to have been circular. Ten out of the eighteen graceful Corinthian pillars that adorned the front of it remain *in situ*, and have been taken as the model from which the circular corner of the Bank of England on Moorgate Street, London, was designed. Our sketch is copied from a photograph procured in Rome.